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JUDAISM AND PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION.

PHILOSOPHY of Religion, in any strict sense of the phrase, was brought to birth only about the third decade of the present century when, for causes that need not here detain us, it began to supplant its immediate ancestor, Natural Theology. Hegel laid the foundation in his epoch-making lectures, first published in 1832, as even those who would dissent strongly from his system are free to declare¹. Accordingly, the new department of philosophical inquiry must be identified with a period marked by certain clearly-defined characteristics. And these traits are specially noticeable, not merely within the sphere of the positive sciences, as so many seem inclined to imagine, but also throughout the entire range of the human sciences, to which religion eminently pertains. The historical and comparative methods, with all their implications, plus some operative conceptions derived, mainly by analogy, from the doctrine of evolution, have transformed the outlook upon man's past, upon its relation to the present, and upon its import for the future. While these changes may be said to have sometimes occurred sporadically,—as, for example, by laboriously minute investigation of such a subject as kinship—it is not unfair, I think, to allege that, on a general survey, Hegelian ideas and their derivatives furnish the static element. In other words, they persist, because the leading aggregations, or purviews, of immense masses of detail are due to them or to their immediate influence.

¹ E. g. E. von Hartmann and P. C. de la Saussaye.

Nay, if this be comparatively true, and no more, of ethics and jurisprudence, it is superlatively the fact in respect to religion and theology.

The misprising of the Jewish religious genius, a leading mark of Philosophy of Religion hitherto, may be traced with large show of reason to these causes¹. Other factors also exercised no little propelling force in a similar direction, but they were merged in the principal influence already mentioned. Before proceeding to advance some constructive considerations from a somewhat different standpoint, the situation hitherto developed may be delineated.

(1) In approaching a subject so multifarious and complex in its manifestations as Religion, numerous pitfalls lie hidden for the unwary. To begin with, the psychology of the phenomenon as a whole cannot be considered with too much circumspection. Even now, the place and precise operation of feeling and sentiment are by no means clearly understood. The action of the will, as it elevates the worshipper to his God, cannot be said to have received unbiassed investigation. Nor has the intellectual recognition of man's situation, as a being organic to a cosmos, been carried much beyond the comparatively barren discussions of metaphysical logic. As a result, the conception of Religion as such has appeared now in the guise of immediate feeling, anon under that of ecstatic enthusiasm, or, once more, as a purely rationalistic theory of the divine expressing itself in humanity and in the world as it is for men. In the second place, till within very recent years, the Science of Religions had not garnered the indispensable facts with sufficient accuracy or universality. And even yet obscure or inaccessible religious phenomena—Lamaism, for example—remain to be described. So Philosophy of

¹ Of course, not a little misconception may be due to the term—the only one we have, unfortunately—"Judaism," as a name most fittingly applied to that phase of Israel's religion which appeared after the Asmoneans.

Religion has constantly encountered a double danger. The siren, Selection, has held all too potent sway, because at her magic touch many difficulties disappeared, many obscurities ceased to exist. And, on the other hand, thinkers have deemed it wise to approach the recorded phenomena with a preconceived scheme, dependent upon one or other of the three abstractions, emotion, will, intellect. This dual danger has intimated its presence precisely in the methods and results of the dominant school. Logic teaches that the universe, so far as known in human experience, rolls onward through the triple movements of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. Religion, seeing that it is part of this universe, must needs obey a like law in the succession of its manifestations. Consequently, the office of Philosophy of Religion is to separate the permanent from the contingent, to expel refractory facts, and to show how, in each of the great historical faiths and in the lower reaches of the spiritual life, one or other of these "moments" predominates. To illustrate this with the requisite vividness, each religious development must needs be taken in its "essence." Most details are dropped, and such phenomena as seem specially accordant with the method employed are retained on the ground that they are *altogether* representative. Judaism takes its place as the type of the religion of "subjective unity," of a "sublimity in which Nature is entirely negated, is subjective, transitory"; or as one which ended in an "unhealthy division of the inner from the outer life—an opposition of the universal principle to all the particulars in which it could be realized." The stage of antithesis here received its most complete illustration¹.

(2) While systematic Philosophies of Religion were being constructed, with more or less of factual content, investi-

¹ This has been further complicated by the fact that the majority of thinkers are commonly well versed in Greek civilization and unconsciously read as much as possible in its favour. See my *Aspects of Pessimism* (the first essay).

gation of the phenomena themselves—Science of Religions—was proceeding apace. Among the several forms assumed by this department of research, the so-called higher criticism is by no means the least important. Plainly, a religious type, enshrined in sacred books, and presenting a well-defined quasi-secular history, falls to be investigated after an especial manner. On the bases of literary insight and sense of historical proportion, analogies drawn from the theory of evolution came to be introduced into a sphere where their application was previously matter of the vaguest conjecture. As a consequence, traditional misconceptions, common to Jew and Christian alike, began to be overthrown, and a re-orientation of ideas, one still in progress, was initiated. The implications of this process need not concern us at the moment. Suffice it to say, traces of change, of progress and decay, were everywhere detected lying embedded in the constituent books of the Old Testament. This discovery came as welcome news to the philosophical systematizers of religion, and for obvious reasons. The religion could now be viewed in the series of its developing stages. An immanent logic might thus be read out of the historical process far more simply, and the general tendency towards a fixed or inevitable end might be established with relative certainty. The typical characteristics of the religion, in short, could be strongly intensified; the presuppositions could be rendered plain; and the unavoidable conclusion could be fathered upon the first implications of the semi-historical past. The *analogy from evolution* took its place as the sole rationale of the *actual development*.

(3) Finally, strange as it may seem, exponents of Philosophy of Religion have shared disabilities usually associated with restraints peculiar to orthodox theologians only. The exigencies of their scheme have pressed too hard upon them. Oftentimes vision is completely distorted. On the assumption that Christianity is the "absolute" religion, it becomes imperatively necessary to

read the entire evolution in the interests of a terminus known beforehand. The conclusion, held as a faith, conditions the mode of approach, particularly in certain important psychological mannerisms. The investigator finds it his imperative duty to take his own universe to pieces, as it were, ere he gain entrance to the contrasted world of other religions. Thus, almost unconsciously, a subtle inclination to approach pre-Christian religions *de haut en bas* displays itself. I am not concerned to deny that the Christian standpoint, by which I am myself profoundly swayed, must ever issue in some such result. On the contrary, I am well aware that it is nigh impossible for any one—be he Jew or Christian—who has everywhere experienced throughout the entire building of his spiritual being the silent irresistible pressure of the Christian *ethos*, to “make down” his experience so as to occupy a truly pagan outlook with any sort of vividness¹. Nevertheless, it ought to be insisted that, so far as Philosophy of Religion has yet gone, another and somewhat different effect has acquired prominence. The glance from above downwards has been extended so as to include Judaism in the purview of classical paganism, oriental pantheistic-nihilism, fetichism, and so forth. Thus, well-nigh insensibly, Judaism has been taken at its lowest, and its *absolute* value in the chain of evolution has been evaporated. Philosophy of Religion, in short, has omitted to remember the deep sense in which we are all still Jews, and must ever be. The analogy from evolution demands a process without breaks; this can hardly be traced in the spiritual as in the natural sphere, as many thinkers have indeed explicitly admitted, by recognizing the leap that

¹ The semi-successful attempt in such a work as *Marius the Epicurean* is due far more to the letter than to the spirit. It would have been impossible had not Graeco-Roman philosophy at length come to speak in quasi-Christian language. The “body” of thought can be reproduced, not the spirit. And Pater’s success was with the body. The meaning is everywhere altered by the accomplished facts of the Christian centuries.

unquestionably occurs with the appearance of Christianity. The point to be urged is, that as between Judaism and the other pre-Christian faiths a parallel gulf exists. It is not necessary, even for the convinced Christian, to strip off his presuppositions when he comes to contemplate Judaism; and this no matter how persistently he must seek to acquire a new atmosphere for his perspective of polytheistic faiths. Notwithstanding he has too frequently been ready to forget in act what he says with his lips: "Salvation is of the Jews." The prayer for "God's ancient people," familiar to some of us from our childhood, uttered from Sabbath to Sabbath by many a sincere and saintly minister, by its very reference to God stultifies itself after a fashion. Despite later events, the promise, "to the Jew first," still remains true; and the conclusions which Philosophy of Religion exists to reach serve but to emphasize this aspect of essential religious development.

In its past treatment of Judaism, Philosophy of Religion has succumbed to these three influences, which, indeed, seem to surge through it only as different currents in a single main stream. The consequences may next be briefly indicated.

At the outset, it may fairly be said that a religious problem has been handled as if it were metaphysical and metaphysical only, such are the present methods in Philosophy of Religion. The Jewish experience—turned on the personal relation between man and God. In order to appraise it justly, this limitation, if such it be, ought never to drop out of sight. The moment an attempt is made to bring Judaism within the categories of a metaphysic that seeks for a theory of the universe, violence is done, and the basis for a faithful presentation of its special service in the evolution of religion is swept away. The human-divine problem cannot be rendered amenable to the purely logical movement of categories; it always possessed, and always will possess, too much reality. In other words, the tortuous paths of man's constant spiritual

experiences cannot thus be made straight by the touch of a single thought. Consequently, when thinkers sought to apply these formal tests, many portions of the history proved refractory, and came, in the issues, to be cast out, because they must perforce be labelled "contingent." Judaism has thus been subjected to a criticism that is valid only from a specialized standpoint. Speculative insight, for example, is denied it, and in the train of this defect—which, be it observed, may not be a defect at all, but a necessary accompaniment of what it accomplished—endless errors are held to follow. Worst of all, it was pre-condemned to end in self-contradiction; and out of this Christianity grew, destined thereby to "transcend and include" its immediate forerunner.

To render this theory workable, to bring the multiplicity of religious events in the past within the compass of the few metaphysical categories, it became necessary to forget many things. The variety of attitude towards *Jawe*, illustrated in the Hebrew Bible, it was implicitly contended, could be most characteristically expressed in one, and only one, way. The individuality of the god, hermetically sealed up within himself, and so cut off increasingly from man and from the universe, furnished the single distinctive manifestation. The insignificance of humanity, the utter insignificance of isolated personality, and the judgment that the earth is a very little thing, are legitimate deductions from this. Gloominess, lack of attention to the wonder and beauty of nature, therefore mark the religion. This supplies the essential inwardness of the mightiest national optimism ever known. So, too, formalism contrives to reign supreme. The means to worship became the end, and thus touch with God was lost. Conviction of the worthlessness of life accordingly ensued, and man, the subject, was cast back upon his own resources in utter helplessness and hopelessness. This was the legitimate and inevitable goal of Judaism, it had no further meaning, no other and later implications.

In its reduction of Judaism to a rational link in a chain of rational development, then, Philosophy has hitherto been prone to proceed on certain obvious assumptions. The habit of taking the religion in its later periods has also sensibly grown, and the interpretation of Prophetism, the truly constructive element, has had to submit to a corresponding shrinkage. With respect to the latter, the assumption that the prophetic conception of religion is purely subjective seems to have gained greater and greater acceptance. Because prophets and holy men were the vehicles of the revelation, thinkers have concluded that therefore it bore import for them only, forgetting that they had something to prophesy. Subjective—or spiritual, as I should prefer to say—as their notion of *Jawe* was, they by no means lay exclusive stress upon the personal relation between *a* man and God wherein what is commonly called “conversion” germinates. They had the nation constantly in view, not this or that Jew. And the compromise which appears to have been effected between them and the priests proves that social, or objective, and not individual or exclusively subjective, ends dominated them. *Jawe* is conceived of, not so much as transcending the physical world, but rather as inhabiting a sphere infinitely removed from that peculiar to the pagan deities. To the individual he may not approach very closely, notwithstanding the “still, small voice,” nevertheless he *is* immanent in the providential progress of Israel in the past. This constitutes the presupposition of Israel’s history being a history; this alone organized it into a series of events each of which is determined by all the rest. Subjectivity, that is, does not furnish forth the sole trait of Prophetism. And, this being so, the conclusion that legalism is the logical end of subjectivism does not follow. It can, no doubt, be *forced* to ensue by a modern metaphysical interpretation of an ancient and naïve religious temper. But the fact remains that the Jews never interested themselves in any such philosophical question.

They were satisfied to know that Jawe charged himself specially, if not exclusively, with their case. The necessity for elaborating a theory of this, God's comparative propinquity, did not exist. Had not Jawe proved this himself by the mighty events of the past?

Lastly, in anxiety to heighten the disastrous effects of subjectivity, the *Torah* has been pilloried and used as a cock-shie at which any and every extreme epithet may be flung. Now, while many of us may be firmly convinced that this was chief among several causes that produced a condition imperatively calling for a new prophet, it is hardly scientific to forget that later Judaism, as it developed in Palestine, passed through, not one, but many phases¹. It is far too complex to admit of adequate expression in this simple, if convenient, way. Once again, we may admit that the law, as embodying a prescribed way of salvation by good works, "was liable to lead to hypocrisy and superstition. . . . It tended to destroy the unity of human character, as if it were nothing more than a number of actions, law-breaking and law-fulfilling. It tended to make men think that God also, in his capacity of Judge, took the same mechanical view of human nature, and that, keeping a register of every man's acts, both good and evil, he would allow a number of so-called 'good deeds,' to cancel the punishment, which in another world was supposed to await the evil-doer²." But we must remember that "no fixed and formulated dogma of 'good works' was ever worked out and accepted by the synagogue; and far more frequent than any notion of striking a balance upon the right side in the moral account with God is the doctrine that human merits are as nothing in his sight, and that man depends for his salvation upon God's mercy and lovingkindness³." It will not suffice to assume that the

¹ There is e.g. the whole complicated question of the rise of the "individualist" sects—Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes, and so on.

² *Hibbert Lectures*, C. G. Montefiore, pp. 527-8.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 528; compare the immediately following pages.

teaching of the "straitest sect of the Pharisees" stood for the religious attitude of a whole people, any more than it would be just to infer that the enormities of Roman emperors and their favourites exhausted the moral phenomena of the later classical world. Despair—the absence of ideals—finding momentary anodynes in cant and hypocrisy, was not the single feature of the people whom Titus broke in pieces after that desperate resistance. Rather, fanaticism of race, based on a deeply justifiable sense of superiority, betrayed the prominent temperament; and it is precisely in the roots of this mastering conviction, a conviction that still energises the Western world over, we must seek the ultimate significance of all that the Jews accomplished for the extension of man's spiritual insight. The crucifixion of Jesus was a practical paradox, one of those humorous situations in history which are humorous by the fact that in a circumscribed case they reveal universal principles that inevitably reverse the meaning of the isolated occurrence. If the Law had slain God, the Crucifixion brought him to life again.

In view of these tendencies, themselves temporary and already beginning to pass away, reconstruction and interpretation from another side are forced upon one.

As has just been indicated, the Jews looked down upon the pagan world with no little justification; and, in a similar strain, I have hinted that the necessity for "unmaking" present experience, with its highly complex spiritual presuppositions and filiations, does not exist in relation to Judaism as in respect of polytheistic faiths. If there be a great gulf fixed between the religion of Israel and Christianity, as many think, one must admit on identical grounds that a like separation marks the former off from the remanent pre-Christian cults. The fact receives characteristic illustration from the Graeco-Roman attitude towards both. No doubt, the newer religion suffered persecutions to which, at the moment, the elder was not exposed. For this, pervasive principles connected

with high Roman policy, and the inveterate habit of the Christians to organize themselves into what seemed secret societies, afford reasons and to spare. But, apart altogether from these historical circumstances, the pagan world evinced equal incapacity to understand either. In the formative qualities that thus blinded later Classical civilization the kinship between the two spiritual religions must be sought. This total incapacity to compass Judaism and Christianity was most typically embodied in the epithet "atheist" impartially applied to both. The Greeks and Romans could understand gods of whom images were constructed. In the time of the Empire, when antagonistic people had so far become one as to cease from war, they could appreciate, if by no more than an otiose acquiescence, the conception of friendliness or indifference between the gods of various races. But, in lurid contrast to Juvenal's *turba deorum*, stood Jawe, above all because beyond them. His worshippers did not represent him—they could not show their God—and so they must needs be atheists. Moreover, Jawe claimed to be the only God, and his people, themselves unable to perceive the elements of good in paganism, withdrew from the unclean thing, so earning the universal contempt of Caesar's subjects, mingled too with a fear that bred hatred¹. Precisely the same held true of Christianity, and the causes were identical—they lay in the very nature of the religions themselves. Both equally stood concentric to ideals that had never entered into the pagan consciousness. These were incalculable, because no measure existed whereby they might be appraised². Further, man's well-known admiration for the ill-understood ever easily passes over into enmity, and in this case the transformation was inevitable. For the pagan knew by experience that the operation of these two faiths led their devotees to contemplate purposes which he could in no wise fathom, and to take for uttermost reality much that he deemed quite

¹ Cf. Tacitus, *Hist.* v. 4 ; Cicero, *Pro Flacco*, 28.

² Cf. Tacitus, *Hist.* v. 13 ; Juvenal, *Sat.* xiv. 95 ; Strabo, *Geo.* xvi. 2.

chimerical. Why not worship the emperor? Why not cheerfully enter into the whole round of these social observances wherein religious custom played so large a part? What solid ground could there possibly be for refraining from exercises which the cultivated knew for mere forms, which the masses loved on account of their material accompaniments? No *panem*, no *circenses*, the thing was monstrous! So to the pagan mind Jew and Christian came under a common condemnation, for they had *religious*—and not simply moral—reasons for preferring death to apostasy. Moral grounds the Stoics and their followers could have evaluated, but religious scruples of this kind originated in another sphere which, being out of their reckoning, seemed wholly fantastic. It might be a palliation of Jewish folly, as Tacitus thought, that these accursed habits had descended from uncultured ancestors; the Christian had no such extenuation to plead. Yet, despite this difference, both were on the same footing when it came to a succinct statement of their misdeeds. Did they not equally evince a “hatred of the human race”? This, and such as this, supplies a far more certain cue to the essentially permanent element in Judaism than any amount of skilful speculative theorizing.

The attempt to trace, even in the outline, Jewish progress in its most characteristic sphere, religion, would be out of place here. We are to deal only with the essential contribution, for with this alone Philosophy of Religion concerns itself. Yet it ought to be noted that the problem presents a very curious and instructive parallelism to that of Greek culture. The debt to Hellenic civilization under which the world labours has too often been obscured by the judgments of Roman writers, who, simply because they stood so near some Greeks, cannot be implicitly trusted. Tacitus and the rest mistook the Hellenistic for the Hellenic. And so, to arrive at a just estimate, one must go back to a time when the Greeks were not as yet individualized, to a period when that universal *ethos*, which

made Plato and Aristotle in a sense the only true philosophers before Spinoza, had not entered upon the stages of clear differentiation in the teaching of Zeno and Epicurus, and of obscurer transformation in the Graeco-Roman, semi-Platonic (Plutarch), and Graeco-Jewish schools. The "fleeting moment" of the realization of the Hellenic ideal was so fleeting that it is hard to stop it, just at such and such a point, for the purposes of detailed examination. The fervent city-patriotism of Pericles¹ and the more judicial, but still semi-enthusiastic, reflections of Thucydides² perhaps mirror it best. For an all too brief hour, city and citizens were completely attuned. There was no universal except in the particulars, no particulars save as organically related to the universal.

Precisely the same holds true of the Jews when one approaches their immortal past. Historical personages, semi-mythical occurrences, and heroes before Agamemnon there were ere, at one stroke, Athens rose to the heights of her splendour, her power, and her deathless glory. So, too, ere the Prophets uttered their burning words, Judges, Moses in his idealized atmosphere, the half-legendary Abraham and his mighty ancestors of the Mesopotamian Valley had fought their fight. But the uniqueness of Israel, all her people were destined to achieve for the world's advance, lies enshrined in the visions of these sad, heroic seers. They were Israel, the universal, just as Pericles and Phidias were, hardly persons, but rather the living embodiment of operative ideals. They voiced they knew not what, for they, and they only, found permanent expression for the thoughts of the dumb thousands whose hearts leaped within them as they heard echoed back their own inmost yearnings. Changes too emerged, traceable even in the magnificent apostolic succession. To Deutero-Isaiah the ideal has become an object of reflection—something so definite as to be almost surprised into superior perfection still—just as for Plato the aroma of Greek

¹ Cf. Thucydides, ii. 37.

² Cf. e.g. *ibid.* i. 70.

civilization, though the breath of his nostrils, seemed to be escaping into free air; its very value impressed him with the urgent necessity for providing new means of preservation. Yet, notwithstanding the exile and the plain influence of Persian "duotheism," Deutero-Isaiah remains a herald of typical Jewish ideals, in the same way as Plato is of Greek, despite the Peloponnesian war and the uprising of the faction or sectarian spirit destined so soon to ruin all. With Malachi as with Aristotle, the vivifying conceptions stand bathed in the light of the after-glow. It profits nothing in either case to seek permanent constructive traits in the individualistic schools composed of men desiring escape from the invasions of a Fate that had swept off their once all-satisfying civic vocation, or in the equally individualistic sects debating on a personal immortality that had been long implicitly assured by the infinite nature of men made in the image of a truly infinite God, whose service gave them the perfect national freedom which lent them all the worth they possessed. The Greek developed his genius in joy, the Jew in misfortune; and in both instances alike it was not an individual's happiness or an individual's sorrow that availed. The city dowered the citizen with her delights, the nation poured her ills upon the dwellers in Judea. When Greek and Jew knew themselves, and developed an isolated personality, joy lost its charm, suffering missed its lesson. To the Prophets, then, Philosophy of Religion must go, and go too with open ear, willing to hear ere essaying to judge.

At the outset it is to be remembered that what is called prophecy must be regarded as a ubiquitous phenomenon. It was no special possession of the Jews, nor even of the Semitic races collectively. The magicians of Chaldea, the wise men of Egypt, the ascetics in various kinds of India, the soothsayers of Philistia, the "prophets of Baal," all come under the definition. In Greece, where the records are fuller, and our acquaintance more intimate, perhaps more sympathetic, its recurrence is familiar and often

sensibly influential. So much so that Plato—whose business as a philosopher was to explain all aspects of life—devotes special attention to it in his most apocalyptic dialogue, and sharply distinguishes the office of diviner (*μάντις*) from that of prophet (*προφήτης*). “No man, when in his sense, attains prophetic truth and inspiration; but when he receives the inspired word, either his intelligence is enthralled by sleep, or he is demented by some distemper or possession. And he who would understand what he remembers to have been said, whether in dream or when he was awake, by the prophetic and enthusiastic nature, or what he has seen, must recover his senses; and then he will be able to explain rationally what all such words and apparitions mean, and what indications they afford to this man or that of past, present, or future good and evil. But while he continues demented he cannot judge of the visions which he sees or of the words which he utters; the ancient saying is very true, that ‘only a man in his senses can act or judge about himself and his own affairs.’ And for this reason it is customary to appoint diviners or interpreters as discerners of the oracles of the gods. Some persons call them prophets; they do not know that they are only repeaters of dark sayings and visions, and are not to be called prophets at all, but only interpreters of prophecy¹.” One must conclude, accordingly, that Hebrew prophecy is important, not because it is prophecy, but on account of its peculiar nature. Being distinctive, or unique, it brought a new element, one not otherwise contributed, to the spiritual heritage of humanity.

Religion as we moderns know it, while a highly complex thing viewed from the psychological or individual side, becomes even more complicated when regarded from a universal or genetic standpoint. At least four main life-streams commingle in it. From Greece it largely derives the conception of God’s manifestation in the universe; from Rome, the idea of God’s identical relation to

¹ *Timæus* (Jowett), 71, 72.

all men everywhere; from Teutonic character, the importance of God's connexion with every man apart; from the Jews, God himself. And Hebrew prophecy supplied the means whereby this consciousness of God first fully developed itself. It set forth the explicit recognition of God as God.

Like all other great men, the Prophets were in one way products of their time. Assyria and Babylon moved them to utterance, Israel furnished the theme. Yet, on the contrary, they returned double for all they had received. Their own personality overflowed the intruding influences and, transforming them all to a new purpose, wrought something entirely individual, something at once strange and familiar. The great succession from Amos to Malachi did not bring forth a single philosopher. No attempt to theorize deity appeared, no effort to regard his nature and his relation to his people from a speculative vantage-ground stands recorded. The pervading genius was entirely religious, never metaphysical. In other words, intuition rather than reflection furnished the source whence the divine efflatus poured out. The materials which Israel generated, so to speak, afforded nothing to rationalize; there was much, very much, to tell. Hence, the Prophets cannot be said to have found their vocation in *foretelling*. Their winged words witness to the constant interaction of three main factors, factors that have ever effectually energized in mighty spirits. From the present they cast back glances to the past, but not with blurred vision, nor to the entire past. By one flash of insight the abiding is disengaged from the transient. Then, thus enlightened, the seers yearn themselves into the future. And in some such experience of a fathomless need their telling transfigures itself into foretelling. For, according as understanding of past and present deepens, so is the wisdom for guidance in the future. The central hopes did verily find realization, because the central fears were so trebly grounded, and because the single remedy stood in such clear light. Out

of a tremendous faith a real deity sprang into effectual being, and as the same faith underwent rejuvenescence from time to time, the Jews contrived to lay an everlasting burden upon mankind—to fulfil all that had been told ; and an irredeemable debt—perception of the sole conditions of fulfilment.

All this the Prophets arrived at by way of the nation. To allege that they stated nothing more than their own subjective impressions, is like accounting for Shakespeare's men by urging that they were his creations out of nothing, and were limited by his own hermetically sealed ideas. As Assyria and Babylon smote, the Jews lost themselves, and instinctively clung together for safety at first, then for comfort. The Prophets revealed the immanent principle of this association. Jawe was not their particular deity, but the God of the whole earth, whose ways they closely traced, whose fundamental purposes they divined, whose near rule stirred their finest aspirations. No *Logos* manifested him to them ; no *daimonia* whispered his intimations in their ears ; they sketched no scheme of warlike operations for earthly victory and deliverance. All equally bodied forth a common national experience, all alike superadded to this, though in varying degrees, a penetrating judgment upon the nature of man as primarily a moral and religious being. Through them the crucifixion of Israel transformed the "chosen people" into the Messiah among all nations. And in this stupendous fact—which *the* crucifixion completely obscured at the moment and still largely conceals—Philosophy of Religion must perforce seek the final inwardness of Judaism. So long as the new philosophical discipline remains saturated with Greek speculative conceptions, it is foredoomed either to end in failure or to execute injustice, precisely as, were it saturated with Jewish presuppositions, it would inevitably misprise Hellenic paganism *in toto* and Roman legalism in part.

The Prophets, then, perceived once and for ever that man's highest humanity centres in and converges upon

deity. Not, however, upon a tribal god, but upon the God of the whole earth. By intuition they attained what Plato half poetically thought, what Plutarch most pathetically longed for, and attempted to build up philosophically from out the beggarly elements that lay scattered confusedly around in the first Christian century. Nor can this religious intuition of theirs be regarded as a bare piece of unorganized sentiment. Such was its mastering power that immediately and unconsciously it enlisted the eager services of reason and will. The ideal, felt at first, became clear with almost perfect clearness by the interaction of reason, and gained a consecration, equalled only in some Christian lives, by the operation of will. If men, who are men, cannot but weep together and triumph together over the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, they cannot but perceive the realized truth of the fifty-fifth: "Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and a nation that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee;" they cannot but work together for the building into life of that city of God which, though still the one far-off divine event, first entered into the human heart through the hidden wisdom of Isaiah of Babylon. So working, too, his promise holds good for all even to-day. "They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for calamity; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass that, before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox; and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord." The rationale of the religion of Israel, the contribution it has rendered to universal spiritual growth, cannot be evaporated by any philosophical subtlety from the old, old promise—itsself a prophecy, because of its strange fulfilment—"In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

Thus the central import of Judaism, when it is brought to occupy its place in a developing whole, fails to appear in a logical theory that takes prominent account of supposed "subjectivity" or "objectivity." To label the Jews subjective, and so to convict them of speculative incapacity, is not far removed from the amiable delusion of the Greeks, that they must be irreligious. Logical they were not, as occidentals understand logic; yet they had unexampled consistency, and in the immeasurable measure of this lies the root of their universally meaningful doings. Their eternal message—the unity of God and the oneness of real manhood with him—transcends our abstract makeshifts altogether. These but tend to render the concrete contribution itself an abstraction. For Judaism is not to be estimated in terms of its quasi-close in the groups of bickering sectaries, but by that portion of it, once its all in all, which lives to-day organic to even the most Christian character, and must ever continue thus vitally energizing. The veritable revelation impressed upon heathen civilization at the time of the *Diaspora* may, indeed, have ceased to be a revelation now. But this is traceable to its very character as originally such. It has been incorporated in a larger life, and persists as an indispensable element in that more spacious revelation ever manifesting itself from age to age in the deeds of all the world's true workers. The conclusion of the whole matter occurs in a phrase familiar enough. The word of the God of Israel endureth for ever. A word spoken, no doubt, in many ways, but a God first fully comprehended and finally revealed by the mouths of the Prophets only.

While this attitude might be further emphasized and variously illustrated by reference to the Psalms and to the Messianic expectation, did space permit, a few remarks regarding its influence over the view we must take of the Law may be permitted in conclusion.

It may be, I think it is, quite true that "a spiritualism which despises nature, a monotheism which separates God

from his world, and a subjective morality which divorces the inner from the outer life and breaks the organic bond between the individual and society—these cannot be conceived as a final goal of progress in which man can rest.” But is the illustration selected justifiable? “The highest and, as it might be called, the *typical* example of this kind of religion is Judaism.” The alleged separation of God from his world has already received attention. In the light of the previous discussion, what can we say of the “subjective” morality that Philosophy of Religion so frequently emphasizes? This way of regarding the problem is probably an effect of long travail with Greek thought, of intimate acquaintance with its methods, of affectionate admiration for its achievements, especially as discerned in Plato. But, viewed from the other side, Greek morality is itself subjective. Self-love is its principle, even though the self be identified with the city. For this the identification of the ethical with the aesthetic standpoints must be held responsible. “Virtue,” Plato teaches, “will be a kind of health and beauty and good habit of the soul ; and vice will be a disease and deformity and sickness of it¹.” Even more explicitly Aristotle reasons from the artistic analogy. A good man “will be eager in a moderate and right spirit for all such things as are pleasant and at the same time conducive to health or to a sound bodily condition, and for all other pleasures, so long as they are not prejudicial to these or inconsistent with noble conduct or extravagant beyond his means. For unless a person limits himself in this way, he affects such pleasures more than is right, whereas the temperate man follows the guidance of right reason².” Or, as Plato puts it, revealing the inner principle, “The virtue of each thing, whether body or soul, instrument or creature, when given to them in the best way, comes to them not by chance, but as the result of the order and truth and art which are imparted to them³.”

¹ *Republic*, 444.

² *Ethics*, iii. 14, 1119 a 11.

³ *Gorgias*, 506 d.

The self constitutes the central interest; it is filled with material out of which a good statue may be chiselled ethically; to know how to do this is the starting-point of all moral advance. The self that continues ignorant in this matter cannot be regarded as morally estimable; it may be disregarded. Jewish morality, on the other hand, issues from self-denial, though the self be identified with the "chosen people." Philo, little as he grasped many things, understood this contrast perfectly. "Man should not regard the world as an appendage to himself, but himself as an appendage to the world¹." After a sort, Jewish "legalism" was never really legalistic; for it depended on a perception that the earth is the Lord's. Morality, that is, operates in no finite world, but by its very nature partakes essentially in the divine. At its worst Judaism imposes endless ceremonial details, striving to attain the divine by a *progressus ad infinitum*; at its best it envisages the spirit of the one code that testifies to the secret source of moral purity. In the former case individualistic tendencies hold mastery; in the latter, national. Or, to put it otherwise, the legalism contemplated by Philosophy of Religion—ceremonialism—is not characteristic any more than cynicism was representative of Athenian ethical teaching. It is not so much Jewish as specifically bound up with some Jewish sects. Whereas true legalism is not in this sense legalistic, but the codified expression of an inner national perception in ethics, a perception that the Jews themselves never altogether lost; one, too, that Western civilization never altogether gained till after the Reformation, even if it can be said to have grasped it now. In a spiritual regard, the Jew was the lawgiver to the universe, as was the Roman juridically; for he had achieved the height whence he could see that no true morality is possible apart from a certain attitude of heart. From prophetic times his "moral universe" was the "moral

¹ *Quod deus sit immut.*, 4.

universe¹" which men seem to be slowly recovering in these last years. And this ethical insight, which renders the Jew the moral revealer as well as the God-giver to humanity, was intimately bound up with Israel's permanent contribution to religious advance.

The isolated subject—the *ego*—alone separates between God and man. Through his falling away evils smite the people. So far the religious aspect. But, ethically, this same *ego* is the divider between man and himself, and especially between individual men and their neighbours. To this truth the Law, in its first purity, gave expression. Men learn to escape this danger in proportion as they remember the deep reasons for honouring father and mother, for respecting the rights of fellows. In brief, the organic connexion between rights and duties becomes plain. The "Ten Words" set forth a solidarity of human interest, convey a recognition of the interdependence between the individual and his social environment, which the modern world at this late hour begins to acclaim as if it were a new evangel. And this, be it noted, is the characteristic legalism of the Jews—a moral purity, not a ceremonial rectitude. Here, then, Jewish ethics have gifted something eminently tangible to the moral stock of mankind at large. The ethical influence, indeed, may be no wise comparable with the religious, and therefore may not always receive adequate recognition. At the same time the two are inseparable. Through his God-consciousness, the Jew first of all peoples rose to a conception of morality which savoured nothing of self-culture, self-shaping, self-sufficiency, but everything of that self-denial and self-abasement whereby a nation sent up a shuddering sob from the depths of sin to the heights of realization and perfection whereon its God sat enthroned. This is the essential lesson of the so-called "legalism," and it must be learned by all

¹ For the meaning of this semi-technical phrase, see Prof. Mackenzie's *Manual of Ethics*, p. 269.

men the world over. Jewish ceremonialism was, in truth, transitory ; Jewish "legalism" is eternal, for in it man first perceived, and in one way finally perceived, why the "moral universe" is one in principle with the greater worlds of humanity and nature which, together with it, constitute the organic unity called experience.

In relation to Judaism, as to all religion, philosophy must trace the spiritual rather than the speculative in the facts of history. And to disengage the Jewish ideal it were well for it to remember that even "visions" of prophets, sentimental as they may seem, often suggest truths that the subtlest reasoning is apt to miss. The insight of Ezekiel, mere dream as it appears, affords an excellent starting-point for calculation of the debt owed by universal religion and morals to a despised, misunderstood, and rejected community. "And it shall come to pass, that every living creature which swarmeth, in every place whither the rivers shall come, shall live . . . and everything shall live whithersoever the river cometh." This river flows from Jerusalem.

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